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PP RUEHDBU
DE RUEHNT #0439 0621311
ZNY CCCCC ZZH ZDK
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FM AMEMBASSY TASHKENT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5276
INFO RUEHTA/AMEMBASSY ALMATY PRIORITY 7677
RUEHAH/AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT PRIORITY 1783
RUEHEK/AMEMBASSY BISHKEK PRIORITY 2307
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE PRIORITY 2200
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 6568
RUEHPG/AMEMBASSY PRAGUE PRIORITY 0112
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE PRIORITY 1681

C O N F I D E N T I A L TASHKENT 000439

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DEPT FOR SCA/CEN AND DRL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/03/2016

TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [UZ](#)

SUBJECT: RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY NAMANGAN
CORRESPONDENT RELEASED

REF: A) 05 TASHKENT 2318 B) 05 TASHKENT 3305 C) 05

TASHKENT 3054

Classified By: AMB. JON R. PURNELL FOR REASONS 1.4 (B, D)

¶1. (C) Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) Namangan correspondent Nosir Zokir was released from prison on February 26 after serving a six-month sentence at a Namangan detention facility. Zokir was convicted in August 2005 for insulting a member of the National Security Service (Ref A). Zokir thanked poloff for U.S. efforts to obtain his release. He added that he was not beaten or otherwise physically ill-treated while in confinement. (Note: Zokir is still in Namangan and we have so far only spoken to him on the telephone. End note.)

¶2. (C) With the closure of RFE/RL's Tashkent office in December (Ref B), Zokir is now without a job. He told poloff that he hopes to continue cooperating with his former employer as well as with other radio outlets. (Note: It is unclear if the GOU is still considering additional criminal charges against Zokir for allegedly insulting the president -- Ref C. End note.)

¶3. (C) Comment: Zokir's imprisonment was one of the most egregious violations of media freedom following the May 2005 Andijon violence. While his release is good news, we remain concerned that the GOU could wield the threat of invoking additional charges against him should he ever make statements or engage in activities of which it disapproves.
PURNELL